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Office of the Chancellor
ATTN: Phyllis Wise
Swanlund Administration Building
601 E. John Street
Champaign, IL 61820

May 12, 2015

Dear Chancellor Wise,

My name is Ramogi Huma and I am the Executive Director of the National College Players Association (NCPA), an advocacy group comprised of over 17,000 current and former Division I college athletes. I am contacting you in response to a number of disturbing assertions made by former Illinois football player Simon Cvijanovic against head football coach Tim Beckman and other university officials. Simon has described the incidents below in which he says Beckman mistreated Illinois football players as stated below:

1. Beckman attacked Illinois football player Kenny Knight by kneeling him in the back of the knee and taking him down to the ground after a team fight had been diffused.
2. Beckman pressured Simon to play with a torn labrum in his shoulder and a torn meniscus in his knee on separate occasions. Also, after pressure from Beckman and other coaches, Peter returned to play in games two weeks after injuring an ankle that the doctor told him needed 6-8 weeks of recovery.
3. Beckman threatened to disparage Simon and other teammates' character to NFL scouts if they did not play through injuries that Beckman thought were not serious.
4. Simon was denied access to his medical records for five months and did not get consulted that removing almost all of his meniscus would be an outcome of his knee surgery.
5. Assistant coach Bill Cubit attempted to interfere with Simon's medical treatment by giving medical advice that contradicted that of his doctor. He also threatened to harm Simon's NFL opportunities as pressure to get him to continue practicing while suffering an anxiety attack.
6. Beckman punished Simon's younger brother and former Illinois football player Peter Cvijanovic for failing to gain weight without regard to the health implications in managing Peter's Type 1 diabetes.

In addition to Simon's accusations, the media has reported that former Illinois football player Nick North says that Beckman forced him into playing on a serious knee injury and pressured injured players to return to play sooner than they were ready.

Illinois' athletic director Mike Thomas announced to media that he would conduct an internal review of this situation in conjunction with your office. However, media reports state that Mr. Thomas announced his conclusions that Beckman has put Simon's welfare above everything else and that his medical staff always follows protocols and procedures. In making such statements, Mr. Thomas has compromised the integrity of his review by making conclusions before he collected any evidence to back his conclusions. In addition, it is unreasonable to expect players who may be subject to abusive treatment to speak honestly to athletic program and university officials that can easily identify them. Finally, the media reported that Mr. Thomas intends on keeping the findings from the public.

As Mr. Thomas stated, Simon has made serious accusations. In response, it is responsibility of the University of Illinois to ensure that a serious investigation takes place. For these reasons, the NCPA is calling on the University of Illinois to act immediately to commission an independent investigation into this matter, and to release the findings to the public.

If these and/or other incidents of abuse are verified, the NCPA is calling on the University of Illinois to take the following corrective actions:

1. Terminate the employment of university officials directly involved in abusing players.
2. Require university staff to be mandatory reporters of the suspected or verified abuse of any student – including those that play sports. Those reporting suspected or verified abuse must be protected from any retaliation.
3. All students, including those that play sports, should have the ability to anonymously report suspected or verified abuse of a student to a university official that is held accountable for investigating such reports. The findings of all investigations must be reported to the Chancellor.

If Coach Beckman and any members of his staff are abusing players, the University of Illinois must do everything in its power to end it without delay. I would appreciate a response to our request by Friday May 15, 2015.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ramogi Huma", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ramogi Huma
NCPA Executive Director